

What Parents Should Know About GLP-1 Drugs and Children

A Pediatrician's Perspective on Semaglutide (Ozempic/Wegovy), Liraglutide (Saxenda), and Similar Medications



GLP-1 receptor agonists are powerful medications used in adults to manage type 2 diabetes and obesity. Some of these drugs are now being prescribed to adolescents for weight loss and even children over eight years old, but with significant concerns. As a pediatrician, I believe parents deserve full, clear information before considering these medications for their children.

Potential Side Effects in Children

- **Gastrointestinal issues:** Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and constipation can lead to dehydration and malnutrition.
- **Pancreatitis:** A rare but serious inflammation of the pancreas causing severe abdominal pain.
- **Gallbladder disease:** Increased risk of gallstones or gallbladder inflammation, especially with rapid weight loss.
- **Thyroid tumors:** Animal studies link GLP-1 drugs to thyroid cancers, prompting an FDA black box warning.
- **Nutritional deficiencies:** Appetite suppression may impair growth, brain development, and bone health.
- **Mental health risks:** Potential to worsen body image issues, eating disorders, or anxiety around food and weight.
- **Unknown long-term effects:** We lack studies on the long-term safety of these drugs in growing children.



Why These Medications Are Concerning in Kids

- They do not address root causes of obesity, such as consumption of GMOs/pesticides, nutrient deficiencies, environmental toxicants, sleep deficits, or sedentary habits.
- They may delay or prevent children from learning lifelong healthy behaviors.
- Children need nutrient-rich food to support their development, not appetite suppressants!

Safer, Root-Cause Approaches

- Focus on whole organic and regenerative foods, regular movement, quality sleep, and stress management.
- Address hidden triggers such as ultra-processed food, gut health imbalance, or hormonal disruption, many stemming from environmental toxics.
- Work with integrative or functional pediatric providers to craft a personalized, sustainable care plan.



Pediatric Takeaway

As a pediatrician, I believe every child deserves the chance to thrive holistically including physically, emotionally, and developmentally. That means supporting their growth through real, nutrient-dense food from an organic and regenerative diet, plenty of sunshine and outdoor play, restorative sleep, and freedom from the pressures of adult problems, including social media. These foundational elements are what growing bodies and brains need. There is no place for GLP-1 agonists or any weight-loss drugs in developing children. These medications were never designed for young, healthy bodies, and they distract from addressing the root causes of imbalance. Our focus should be on nourishing children, not medicating them.